



THIS MONTH'S THEME IS...

## CEO'S MESSAGE

Dear Carers

Way back (PP - i.e. Pre Pandemic), when taking a flight was a common activity, we used to be told "Put your own oxygen mask before you attempt to help others who aren't able to help themselves". The same applies to caring roles - if you aren't looking after yourself then the caring role can become really difficult. So this issue is a gentle nag and nudge to look after yourself. Please don't put off medical, dental and well-being activities for too long. Do think about yourself!

As usual in this newsletter, we detail our upcoming activities and events.

If you don't find something to enjoy or of use - then let us know and if possible we will try to find a way to run such an activity. If you have lots of ideas then we are still looking for volunteers to join our Focus group - see page 7. We would value your input in many ways, from getting input about our Diwali and Christmas plans to how our whatsapp communication is going. Other plans we are making include preparing to advertise for a new trustee role and starting a service for Young Adult Carers aged 16-25.

You will notice this newsletter is subtly different -we are listening to a carer volunteer's expert advice about making it more streamlined. As always we are grateful for the many carers who also volunteer with us in so many roles.

Wishing you all good health  
Charmian



## CARING FOR YOURSELF

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# UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

## Understanding Dementia

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**Monday 4th October 2021**  
**2PM- 4PM AT HARROW CARERS**  
**CENTRE**

## Introduction to Mindfulness

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**Friday 15th October 2021**  
**10:30AM -12PM AT HARROW CARERS**  
**CENTRE**

## Pilates

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Sometimes our bodies crave gentle and relaxing movements and this is the perfect Pilates workout for those days.

**Every Wednesday at Old Lyonians**  
**Sports Ground**  
**11.30AM - 12.30PM**

## ZUMBA with Marina

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Get grooving and moving with this versatile fitness class combining all elements of fitness - cardio, muscle conditioning, balance and flexibility, boosted energy and a serious dose of awesome each time you leave class- includes bhanga!

**Every Wednesday at Old Lyonians Sports**  
**Ground**  
**10AM- 11AM**

## Yoga

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A gentle and steady-paced class suitable for absolute beginners, the focus on simple movement to encourage more body awareness and physical mobility including breath and meditation.

**Every Tuesday and Friday at Old**  
**Lyonians Sports Ground**  
**10:30AM- 11:30AM**

## Qigong

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Qigong coordinates gentle, smooth movement and breathing to develop, mind, with visualisation of guiding through the body thus promoting internal healing and increasing energy levels via integrating mind and body.

Please wear comfortable clothing and bring along a pair of canvas shoes or trainers to change into indoors, bring a water bottle and aim to arrive 5 to 10 minutes early to get ready for the session.

**Every Friday at Old Lyonians**  
**Sports Ground**  
**1:45PM- 3PM**

# UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

## Sewing Classes

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Mrs Surinder Lotay will be hosting sewing classes at  
**Harrow Carers centre**  
**every other Wednesday – next session 29th September**  
**2PM - 4PM**

**\*If you would like to join any of the activities please contact [wellbeing@harrowcarers.org](mailto:wellbeing@harrowcarers.org) 020 8868 5224 x 214 for joining instructions.**

## Mental Health Support Group

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Do you care for someone with a mental health condition? If, so join us every **2nd and 4th Friday** of the month to get the support you need.  
**1:30PM to 2:30PM ON ZOOM**

# WORKING FOR CARERS SESSIONS

## CV Writing

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**Thursday 28th October 2021**  
**10:30AM - 11:30AM (ONLINE SESSION)**

This session covers:

- Establishing the aim of the CV for a carer
  - Understanding your target market
    - Personal profile
    - Education & qualifications
  - Your chronological career history
    - What roles have you undertaken
- Listing your key duties & responsibilities
  - Technical capabilities
  - Your achievements
- Listing your key skills & competencies
  - Other relevant experience
  - References/testimonials

**\*If you would like to join any of the sessions please email [workingforcарers@harrowcarers.org](mailto:workingforcарers@harrowcarers.org) or call 020 8868 5224 Ext 218/208 for joining instructions.**

## Interview Techniques

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**FRIDAY 22nd October 2021**  
**11AM - 12PM (ONLINE SESSION)**

This session covers:

- How to answer competency based questions
  - How to prepare for an interview
  - How to explain an employment gap
- How to highlight your key and transferable skills

## Confidence building

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**Thursday 7th and Tuesday 26th**  
**October 2021**  
**10:30AM - 11:30PM (ONLINE SESSION)**

- Fake it until you make it (trying hard is what it needs)
- Positive attitude matters (start with understanding your needs).
  - Challenge your inner critic.
- Don't wait for external validation.

# CARING FOR YOURSELF

## Self-Care & Mindfulness

**This month, Michelle, from our Adult Services Wellbeing team, talks about the benefits of Mindfulness for Self-Care**



**Mindfulness** can help us become more aware of our thoughts, so that we are better able to manage them and not become overwhelmed.

**Practising mindfulness regularly can be a useful tool for helping us to cope with some of the many challenges we face as carers.**

Many people have the idea that it involves us sitting in some impossible pose, and then attempting the equally impossible task of stopping all thoughts entering our minds! On the contrary, with mindfulness, we are not trying to stop the thoughts, but rather, we are learning how to observe them as they come and go, but without getting hooked into the emotional charge that often accompanies them. In fact, in mindfulness practice, it is normal for our thoughts to distract us, for our minds to invariably wander. But the beauty of attending a guided practice, is the facilitator will gently guide you through a series of exercises, focusing on the breath, relaxing and releasing physical tension in the body, and taking you on a wonderful journey through visualisation, to help you find peace and relaxation.

Does mindfulness remove all the worries we face as carers? Of course not. However, what it does achieve, with regular practice, is it helps us build our resilience, it helps us give our minds, and bodies, some gentle respite. It helps remind us; **we all have the ability to find a sense of peace and calm.** It teaches us that self-care is essential for our physical and mental wellbeing. It helps us put a buffer between us, and whatever is going on in our lives, so we are less likely to become completely burnt-out and overwhelmed. Over time, it also helps us recognise our patterns of behaviour, the times when we react to the difficult circumstances we are faced with. It enables us to manage these times with a little more awareness so that we can respond as calmly as possible, rather than having a gut reaction. So mindfulness can help our wellbeing. This is self-care and, it is essential.

**See over for Michelle's advice on Self-Care and stress reduction, and for her 3 top tips.**

**If you would like to experience mindfulness for yourself, come along to one of Michelle's Mini Mindfulness weekly Zoom sessions.**



These sessions are relaxed, informal, and a blend of breathing, relaxation and mindfulness techniques. They start with a gentle 'Body Scan' to help release physical tension, which in turn, helps to slow the mind and all those racing thoughts. (The Body Scan is also a useful tool which you can use on your own to reduce aches, manage pain, and aid sleep.) We continue with focusing on the breath, a deceptively powerful tool to still the mind, and we finish with a wonderful guided visualisation, leaving us calm and relaxed.

These weekly sessions run from 12.30pm—1pm Fridays on Zoom. They are not a course, you can drop in as and when you wish. **If you have any questions, or to get the Zoom link, please email [wellbeing@harrowcarers.org](mailto:wellbeing@harrowcarers.org) or call us on 020 8868 5224.**

# CARING FOR YOURSELF

## SELF-CARE: MANAGING STRESS

**As Carers, it can be very challenging to manage stress, but it is essential for self-care and optimum wellbeing.**

As carers, we often realise we are stressed, but we put off doing anything about it, continually prioritising the needs' of those we care for, above our own needs.

The problem is, if we keep ignoring the physical and emotional warning signs, we can become overwhelmed, exhausted and burnt-out. Our own health can start to suffer, and left unchecked, early warning signs can turn into serious health problems—leaving us unable to continue as carers.

Sometimes, a friend or family member may notice some of these signs before we do (as we're often used to functioning on automatic pilot, keeping going for fear of running out of steam completely if we stop!)

**Stress symptoms and warning signs may include:**

- Feeling overwhelmed, irritable,
- Feeling fearful and worried
- Feeling Weepy, low mood, withdrawing
- Lack of concentration, racing thoughts
- Headaches or general aches and pains
- Tiredness, sleep problems, exhaustion
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling Dizzy
- Eating, drinking or smoking more than usual



This is not an exhaustive list You may experience one of these symptoms, several, or other symptoms. The important thing is to start to become more aware of how you are feeling as this helps us start to find practical ways to reduce our stress, and begin to prioritise our self-care.

**NB: If you are experiencing any new, or unexplained physical or emotional symptoms, check them out with your GP**

### STRESS MANAGEMENT SELF-CARE

**Managing stress is really about managing our time, our lives... ourselves.** Of course this is easier said than done for most people, and for us, as carers, it can sometimes seem impossible.

**So where do we start? Start small~ very small.** Accept that you cannot make lasting changes in a day, or even a week, but know that you can make small changes—ones you feel able to cope with. Also, accept that as a carer, there will be times (sometimes, many times) when your best intentions go out the window as you are faced with yet another difficult situation to sort out for your loved ones. When this happens, try not to get swept-up with negative thoughts, as these will fuel feelings of anger and resentment. Instead, consciously recognise that you are becoming more aware of your thoughts, feelings and reactions. More aware of the effects negative stress is having on your body and mind. Congratulate yourself for starting to become more aware that in order to do a good job of looking after the person you care for, you have to care for yourself.

**This isn't being selfish. This is essential self-care!**

Take time each day to do something you enjoy, however small. Things that motivate you and increase feelings of self-worth and self-esteem. Congratulate yourself for making small, positive changes that improve your wellbeing. Don't beat yourself up if your good intentions go adrift. **Change takes time. Be kind to yourself ~ that's the essence of Self-care.**

Take a look at my Top Tips for Self-care in this issue, and start the journey to positive wellbeing and essential self-care.

Wishing you positive mental and physical wellbeing,

*Michelle*

# CARING FOR YOURSELF

## SELF-CARE TOP TIPS

### Caring starts with self-care

As carers, we often put the needs of those we care for first



We know it's essential that we look after our own wellbeing too, in order to function well and remain physically and emotionally able to cope with the many, daily challenges of being a carer; and yet, we often prioritise everyone, and everything, above our own needs. This can leave us feeling overwhelmed, stressed and burnt-out.

**TOP 3 TIPS FOR SELF-CARE:** Incredibly simple to do, yet deceptively powerful, making these simple changes to your daily life will help you reduce stress, increase resilience, improve your general wellbeing and put you on a path to regular self-care



#### 1) SLOW DOWN... RUSHING IS STRESSFUL!

Being a carer can be 24/7. We're constantly on alert, our minds full of worries, chores, appointments and caring duties, so we find ourselves rushing around trying to fit everything in.

**Rushing is stressful**, it causes the body to release cortisol & adrenalin ('fight or flight' stress hormones.) We may experience racing thoughts, increased heartbeat, sweating, shallow breathing which heighten feelings of stress, anxiety, overwhelm and exhaustion.

Simply by slowing down physically, our mental processes slow down too. We start to feel calmer, more in control, and able to think more clearly. It's such a small thing to do that we think it won't really make a difference, but slowing down helps us recharge, build resilience and relax more easily...

Try it for yourself for a few days and see



#### 2) BREATHE! (It's as easy as one, two, three!)

- 1) Take a deep breath in through the nose, sigh it out, then smile
- 2) Place hand on stomach. Gently breathe 'into your hand' a few times
- 3) Breathe in through nose to count of 5, breathe out through mouth to the count of 5. Repeat. (If a count of 5 is difficult, reduce it.)



#### 3) TAKE REGULAR MINI BREAKS EVERY DAY

As carers, we often feel we don't have a minute to ourselves, or feel guilty and unable to take regular breaks. But we can all take regular 'mini breaks' (literally, a minute here & there.) **And here's what you can do in a minute:**

Breathe | Stretch | Open a window | Drink water | Close your eyes to rest them | Relax your shoulders | Dance or jog on the spot | Write in a journal | Sing | Smile

Try taking just one minute in every 20 to do one of the above and you'll fit around half an hour of self-care in each day without trying!

(Michelle shares more of her tips in her weekly, Mini Mindfulness Zoom Sessions)

# NOTICE BOARD

## DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

Diwali is known as the 'festival of lights' because houses, shops and public places are decorated with small oil lamps called 'diyas'. Diwali is on Thursday 4 November this year. Keep an eye out for more information on the celebrations we have planned.



## HAVE YOUR SAY!

Would you like to have your say on our services, marketing and the activities we provide? We are looking for forward thinking Carers to join our focus group to help shape our future services. First Meeting **Monday 11th October 10.30 at Old Lyonians**. If you require any further information or would like to confirm your attendance please email [karen.withers@harrowcarers.org](mailto:karen.withers@harrowcarers.org).

**YOUR  
OPINION  
MATTERS**



## LIVE HEALTHY COOKING SESSION WITH CHEF COLIN

Friday 24th September



12PM - 3PM at Old Lyonians

## Caring Communities Drop In



An event for everyone who supports a vulnerable person living in Harrow. An opportunity to access information, advice and support from organisations and charities who help unpaid carers.

Friday 1st October 2021  
Old Lyonian Sports Ground  
74 Pinner View Harrow HA1 4QF  
10.30am—13.30pm

You are very welcome to bring the person that you support

Refreshments provided

For more information  
contact : 020 8868 5224  
[admin@harrowcarers.org](mailto:admin@harrowcarers.org)  
[carers@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:carers@harrow.gov.uk)



**Harrow Carers**  
Support, Training & Advice

# Join us for RACE NIGHT

At The Three Wishes  
in sponsorship of Harrow Carers

**19th NOVEMBER FROM 8.00PM**  
A FUN FILLED EVENING FOR A GOOD CAUSE

**\*\* LIVE MUSIC \*\***      **\*\* RAFFLE \*\***

**GET YOUR RACING ATTIRE AT THE READY!**  
**£50 BAR TAB FOR BEST DRESSED**

**20 THE BROADWALK, PINNER ROAD, HA2 6ED**

Made with PosterMyWagon

All enquiries to join please email [Wellbeing@harrowcarers.org](mailto:Wellbeing@harrowcarers.org). Races can be sponsored and advertised.

# NOTICE BOARD

**Would you like to learn more about Borderline Personality Disorder/BPD/EUPD?**

**Do you support someone with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) or Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder (EUPD) or Emerging Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder? Then why not join our 5 week course Families and Carers Training and Support (FACTS).**

**FACTS is a unique, carer-led training programme, developed with the support of the Anna Freud Centre, for the friends and families of people with BPD/EUPD.**

**During the course, you will learn:**

- **What BPD/EUPD is, and how to manage this condition**
- **How you can rebuild relationships and reduce conflict**
- **How best to support your relative or friend**
- **How to cope with your feelings**

**Contact: [BPDboking@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:BPDboking@yahoo.co.uk) FACTS normally runs twice a year**



**If you are interested in FACTS you may also like to know about the Harrow Rethink Support Group for Carers of People with Borderline Personality Disorder/EUPD**

**Enjoy a hot drink in a friendly and supportive atmosphere, share ideas and information**

**We usually meet on the second and last Monday evening of the month, but don't meet on bank holidays.**

**We are currently meeting on Zoom.**

**Contact us to receive details of meetings:**

**[BPDboking@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:BPDboking@yahoo.co.uk)**

**All participants must be aged 18 years or over**



## NEW WHATSAPP GROUP



Some exciting news! We are launching a new WhatsApp group for Carers which will be used to provide updates on events and reminders. Please text 'join whatsapp group' to **0744 0791801** with your name. You will then be sent an invitation link to join.

# SERVICE UPDATES

## Hiring Now!

LOOKING FOR CARE SUPPORT WORKERS TO JOIN OUR TEAM!



Make a real, visible difference and apply now!

### WE OFFER:

- Travel Allowance
- Flexible working hours
- Competitive Hourly Rate
- Free DBS Check
- Refer a friend bonus scheme
- Paid Annual Leave
- Sickness Pay
- Fantastic Training & Career Development opportunities

### JOB TYPE:

Weekday/ Evenings / Weekends

### LOCATION:

Harrow & Surrounding Areas

For more information and an informal chat please call 03300 882224 or email [homecare@harrowcarers.org](mailto:homecare@harrowcarers.org)



## HOME CARE

Do you know someone who is considering a career in adult social care? Or someone who is a motivated and caring person with a desire to help others? Then, why not ask them to come in for a cuppa and a chat with us on **Tuesday 19th October 2021, 11am -3 pm at the Carers Centre,**

Harrow Carers Home Care service provides individuals and unpaid carers with help and support with tasks according to individual needs. Contact us today for more information and to book in your free, no obligation consultation to discuss your needs and how we can help.

## NOVUS HOMESHARE

We have a lovely video from our householder and her daughter talking about their experience and the benefits of homesharing. We are delighted and so proud to receive feedback like this.

[Watch the video](#)

If you know someone who may benefit from this service, please let us know or ask them to give us a call on 03300 88 2225 or visit <https://www.novus-homeshare.org.uk>

**Novus Homeshare** is a charity that matches people who want help or support around the house with people who need accommodation and are willing to help. Our service helps people from all walks of life in need of an extra helping hand at home in London (and surrounding areas), for a reasonable fee.



Are you enjoying the newsletter?  
Click here to leave us a review.



# SERVICE UPDATES

## WORKING FOR CARERS



Working for Carers is a London-wide project that supports **unpaid carers**, aged 25 or over, to move closer to employment. The project is led by Carers Trust and delivered by its network of partners across London. Working for Carers is funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund. As part of the Working for Carers programme we are running the following sessions – Contact Working for Carers to register your interest in attending and joining the programme:

**Confidence Building: Thursday 7th and Tuesday 26th October 2021 at 10.30am-11.30am**

**CV Writing Skills: Thursday 28th October 2021 at 10.30am-11.30am**

**Interview Techniques Friday 22nd October 2021 at 11am-12pm**

Looking after someone while working can be a lot to handle at once. You might be concerned about the person you care about while you work, and this may have a negative impact on your well-being. It can be helpful to know about some of your rights at work and think about what can help you manage your caring and work responsibilities.

**The right to flexible working:** Flexible working can involve changing your work hours – you could start work earlier or finish later to help juggle your caring responsibilities.

**The right to time off in an emergency:** There may be times when you can't go to work because of an emergency situation involving the person you're caring for. If you're responsible for another person, you have the right to time off in an emergency. You must inform your employer as soon as possible after the emergency has happened

Employers who take active steps in taking care of their employees' physical and mental well-being at work can help to keep the staff turnover rate low. Here are a few tips:

- Create a positive environment for carers: [Research conducted by Carers UK](#) show that carers really value having an understanding line manager and a supportive employer. Create a supportive environment where there is no stigma attached to carers identifying themselves.
- Having a carers' support network: Identifying carers can be difficult. In fact, [one in seven](#) are responsible for support for their loved ones who are older, disabled or in a serious condition. Chances are you may have a few carers in your workplace, and perhaps they would feel more comfortable if they had someone to talk to about it – someone in a similar position to them.
- Prioritise training for carers: A carer may feel that they are lacking progression at work, and perhaps forgotten about (even more so due to remote working). They may find it difficult to concentrate on their career because they aren't provided with the right support. Make it easy for people to understand what support is on offer for carers – provide additional training courses, seminars and subscriptions to further their learning. [For more information visit our blog her](#)

Click here to find out more about the Working for Carers programme

To contact Working for Carers call 020 8868 5224 Ext 208/218 or email [workingforcarers@harrowcarers.org](mailto:workingforcarers@harrowcarers.org)

# OTHER UPDATES

Last month we hosted our first Family Funday Picnic! It was amazing to see so many of you enjoying the activities and events throughout the day! A huge thank you to everyone who made this day a success and a special thank you to Harrow School for their generous sponsorship of the event.



# CARING FOR YOURSELF OCTOBER

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO GET HEALTHY THIS MONTH

TAKE A SELF-CARE BREAK BY GETTING OUTSIDE.

STRETCH EVERY MORNING FOR 10 MINUTES.

ALLOW YOURSELF TIME TO RE-ENERGIZE.

EAT THE RIGHT FOODS

ASK FOR HELP WHEN NEEDED.

CALL SOMEONE YOU LOVE TO TALK TO.

DO YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED BY THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF BEING A CARER?

## WE ARE HERE TO LISTEN

The role of caring for someone can be both physically and emotionally challenging. It is therefore often the case that carers need to support themselves in order to continue to provide care to their loved ones.

Harrow Carers can give you further advice on counselling and can register you for our free service. Please get in touch

## NEWS FLASH

### Vaccine Boosters

Unpaid carers who were eligible in Group 6 for the spring vaccination jobs are eligible for the booster job. We are working with partners in government to finalise the logistics of how eligible unpaid carers get the booster to further protect them and the people they care for. We will update carers and Network Partners as soon as we have more information.

## Struggling with your energy bills?



### We can help

Your local energy experts - the Green Doctors - are offering phone consultations to help you save money and stay out of debt.

This consultation is provided by a registered charity for anyone on a low income or over 65 or with a long term health condition or disability.

Appointments available with interpreters for non-English speakers and those using British sign language (via video call).

Book a phone consultation or refer someone else!

0300 365 5003 [greendoctors-london.org](http://greendoctors-london.org)



Green Doctors are part of Groundwork London, a registered charity No. 1121105

Your Green Doctor will help you

- Save money on your energy bills
- Switch energy providers to save you money
- Access the Warm Homes Discounts
- Apply for grants for energy or water debt
- Get additional support

There is no charge for this service  
Even your phone call is free!

## USEFUL LINKS & CONTACTS

Getting help from the NHS : the NHS urges the public to get care when they need it..

Samaritans: if you need to talk to someone.

Rethink: Top tips on managing your mental health.

GOV.UK: What you need to know about coronavirus

Harrow Council: Council updates.

Carers UK: Expert advice, information and support

Ok Rehab: specialises in addiction treatment.

## SEE YOU NEXT MONTH!